

[22 February, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Training to youths in Pakistan to fight against India

171. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that 900 British Muslims are being trained in Pakistan every year to fight a holy war in Kashmir; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken up to control such movement against India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Government are aware of media reports to this effect.

(b) Dangers posed by such recruitment for the ostensible purpose of waging in 'holy war' in Kashmir, have been discussed during the ongoing dialogue with the U.K. including at the first meeting of the India-U.K. Joint Working Group on International Terrorism and Drug Trafficking held on 22nd January, 2001, in New Delhi. Possibilities of cooperation in combating international terrorism under provisions of the UK's Terrorism Act, 2000 were also discussed.

Pak and Chinese diplomacy

172. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan and China have an edge over India in diplomacy;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action proposed to move away from the earlier attitudes in the interest of ending military conflict in Kashmir, Ladakh, Akshi Chin prolonging for more than 50 years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The question does not arise.

(c) India is committed to developing friendly and good-neighbourly relations with China on the basis of Panchsheel and mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns.

India seeks to establish a relationship of peace, friendship and co-operation with Pakistan. India has reiterated its commitment to resuming the Composite Dialogue in an appropriate environment. The Prime Minister has also reiterated India's commitment to resuming dialogue with Pakistan at the highest level.

Sino-Indian ties

173. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to improve Sino-Indian ties;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) the response of the Chinese Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Government of India is committed to the improvement and development of friendly relations with China on the basis of Panchsheel and the principle of mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns. Relations have progressed. Both sides have exchanged high level visits and are moving ahead in different areas such as trade, cultural exchanges, military exchanges, security and foreign office dialogues, and science and technology co-operation. Bilateral trade in the year 2000 amounted to US\$ 2.92 billion, an increase of 47% over 1999. India and China are seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through dialogue.

(c) Senior Chinese leader and NPC Chairman Li Peng visited India from January 9—17, 2001. He described the primary objective of his visit as the promotion of friendship and co-operation with